

MAGNANMETZ GALLERY

For Immediate Release

Wenyon & Gamble

Out of Place: Holograms and Daguerreotypes

November 4 – December 17, 2016

“There is something about holography that is essentially untimely; it was born too late, or too soon; in a sense its time has never come...Yet this quality of temporal homelessness, of never fully arriving on the scene of history, is in fact one of holography's most intriguing properties—and one that Wenyon and Gamble play upon and elaborate, to the point where holography is able to challenge and dislocate our normally secure conceptions of time, of progress, and of history itself.”

Norman Bryson, *Bibliomancy*, catalog.



Detail from *Bibliomancy*

This third Magnan Metz show by the artists features the first New York presentation of *Bibliomancy*, a major installation of 54 holograms of books initially produced and exhibited at the Boston Athenaeum, a cultural institution founded in 1808.

In *Bibliomancy*, the artists use the Athenaeum's holdings to explore questions of American identity and the country's engagement with Europe, monarchy and culture in general. Geopolitical concerns that surfaced during the war in the Balkans—when the work was being produced—have continued their domination in the 21st century. Titles include *How to Save Europe* by Count Malynski and Alfred Tennyson's *The Princess*. Multiple

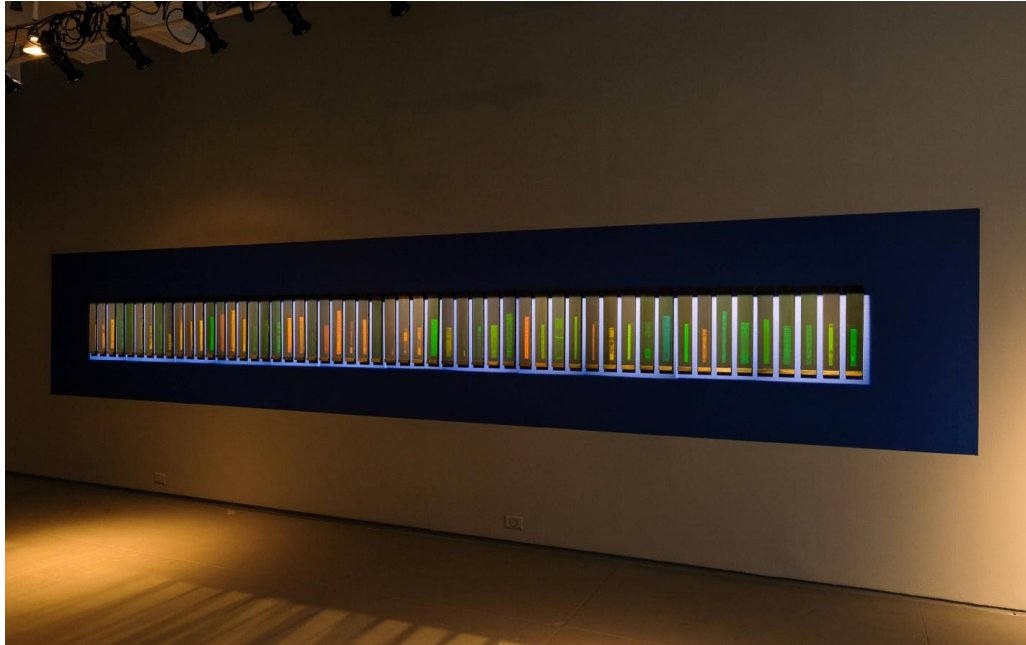
themes are layered throughout the work: there are books on books, books on art, academic texts, rare books, and children's books—including *Christmas on the Mayflower*—contributing to a picturesque image of the past. All mingle in the heightened ghostly form of the hologram.

The word "bibliomancy" is defined as the act of using a passage chosen at random from a book, to provide enlightenment about problems or questions. The book thereby acquires prophetic powers.

"For us," say Wenyon & Gamble, "the selection of books for these holograms itself involved a kind of bibliomancy of chance discoveries and impulsive decisions, which created meanings we had not anticipated when we brought the titles together. Each viewer will find their own readings."

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Susan Gamble (b. London, 1957) and Michael Wenyon (b. Dayton, Ohio 1955) live in London and New York and have collaborated since 1983. Their works are in collections such as The Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the M.I.T. Collection, Boston; the National Portrait Gallery, Washington DC and the National Academies of Science, Washington DC, The Boston Athenaeum, and have been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art and Tate Liverpool, UK.



Bibliomancy Installation View

Quotes about Bibliomancy

"The holograms give the books and drawers the look of specters at a séance in a future, post-literate age... (Kenneth Baker, San Francisco Chronicle)

The wall reads like a piano keyboard of ideas, passions, and stories, ready to play a different song at whim - which is indeed what a library is. "Bibliomancy," for all its technical razzmatazz, is a quiet show, and a substantive one. (Cate McQuaid, Boston Globe)

...Yes, here you are... suddenly—courtesy of holographic technology—able to see things at a slight remove, as if, historically speaking, you had just recently turned your back on a way of being and had taken a step away and were casting a last over-the-shoulder glance back. (Sven Birkerts, *Sense and Semblance: The Implications of Virtuality* from *Readings*, Graywolf Press, 1999)



Bibliomancy Detail

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